

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION WEEKLY UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF March 24th, 2008

Environmental & Agriculture Education Cluster

Spring is a hectic, chaotic time of year for all teachers, and Ag teachers are no exception. There are numerous FFA events this time of year, culminated by State FFA convention in Bozeman.

Several schools so far have announced openings for an ag teacher, and the supply of potential candidates is very limited in number. If you know anyone who might be interested in teaching Ag, please contact myself, Bill Jimmerson, or Dr. Frick or Dr. Igo at MSU. Let's all work on increasing the number of Ag teachers!

So far teachers have indicated we'll have a strong turnout in Kalispell for Summer Conference. I'd strongly encourage everyone to attend.

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Health Sciences Cluster

- The syllabus is attached for the Summer Workshop. Secondary and post-secondary attendees have already been selected.
- I am working on the possibility of offering an on-line "Health Foundations" course. It would be an asynchronous course that needs CTE teacher oversight at the local school level. I am working on local mentoring for each student who chooses this course.
- Our HOSA State Leadership Conference is April 2-5th in Layton, Utah.

Family and Consumer Sciences

- We have received applications for the FCS specialist vacancy (Now that I have moved to Health Sciences full time), and hopefully we'll have someone hired in the not-too-distant future.
- The Tech Prep Consortium primarily concentrated on the Career Fields of Business, Manufacturing and Health Sciences this fiscal year and will focus attention on the fields of Human Services, Agriculture and Communications for FY 2008-2009.
- FCS teachers are not "Field or Cluster specific"; some of you teach courses that are considered part of the Hospitality and Tourism Cluster (culinary arts, lodging management); while some of you teach personal and family finance, and family relations that are part of the Human Services Cluster. We also have subject areas that do not readily adapt to the proposed Clusters, but at this point, ongoing FCS coursework is acceptable under Perkins. We are making progress!
- Teachers will also be asked to participate in revising our state standards and guidelines to align with Career Cluster requirements. This work will begin in Sept. 2008.
- FCCLA State Leadership Conference is March 27-29 in Billings and many of us have been preparing for this exciting event.
- MAFCS Conference is April 16-18th in Helena. Contact Susan Butler for further information at: sbutler@helena.k12.mt.us

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Industrial, Manufacturing & Engineering Systems Cluster

Most recently, the majority of time and effort has been directed toward preparing for the SkillsUSA State Leadership and Skills Conference, which will be held on the MSU-Northern campus April 7-9.

However, the Tech-Prep Manufacturing Cluster work group did meet March 7 and March 13. The person who will represent the eastern part of the state has been officially hired. That person is Jim "Curley" Burns. Curley has had numerous years of experience with CTE programs and he has served as a former CTE Division State Director.

Prospective candidates have been identified to serve on the manufacturing cluster advisory board. Representation will come from business/industry, Class AA and Class C schools. Advisory board guidelines are currently being reviewed. A printed guide will be made available to participating board members. Candidates will be contacted to confirm their intentions to serve on the board.

Articulation agreements that are currently in place are in the process of being reviewed. Some agreements will have to be modified. The intent is that they will look more standardized in structure and content than they do now, a change that is highly approved by postsecondary institutions.

Plans to review program course descriptions will also be implemented in the near future. A brief comparison of a random selection of course descriptions for like named programs has shown a wide variance in content.

Two Professional Development workshops are being planned. The first will take place the week of June 9th at MSU-Northern and will involve CNC Manufacturing Technology.

The second Professional Development Workshop will take place at the Helena COT campus. The tentative date is the week of June 16 and will involve Welding Technology with focus on achieving certain areas of AWS certification.

I will have more information on both Professional Development Workshops as soon as the information becomes available.

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